

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 /056 W  
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P R 091015Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 236  
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA  
AMEMBASSY KABUL  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 2300

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PK, PINT  
SUBJECT: AFTERMATH OF PAKISTAN ELECTIONS

REF: KARACHI 1128 (NOTAL)

1. LATEST UNOFFICIAL RETURNS INDICATE THAT WITH 196 OF 200 SEATS DECLARED, PPP HAS WON 154, PNA 33, AND QML ONE. EIGHT INDEPENDENTS HAVE BEEN CHOSEN FOR TRIBAL SEATS; THEY WILL VOTE WITH GOVERNMENT. PPP TOOK ALL SEVEN SEATS IN BALUCHISTAN (WHERE PNA BOYCOTTED), WON OVERWHELMINGLY IN PUNJAB AND OUTLYING SIND AREAS. PNA TOOK 15 OF 26 NWFP SEATS TO TEN FOR PPP AND ONE (FORMER FEDERAL MINISTER YUSUF KHATTAK) FOR QML. KARACHI BREAK-DOWN IS EIGHT FOR PNA, TWO FOR PPP, WITH COUNTING IN ELEVENTH CONSTITUENCY SUSPENDED DUE ELECTION IRREGULARITIES (PNA CANDIDATE IS AHEAD.)

2. ADDRESSING PRESS CONFERENCE HERE YESTERDAY EVENING, PM BHUTTO EXPRESSED DEEP GRATITUDE TO PEOPLE FOR OVERWHELMING VERDICT.  
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HE SAID MASSIVE SUPPORT TO PPP WAS A VOTE FOR SECURITY AND WELFARE. HE REITERATED HIS COMMITMENT TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR PEASANTS, WORKERS, AND WOMEN, BUT ASIDE FROM FORECASTING SOME CABINET CHANGES MENTIONED NO SPECIFIC PLANS.

3. PM DESCRIBED AS COMPLETELY FALSE PNA ALLEGATION THAT ELECTIONS HAD BEEN RIGGED, AND SAID ELECTION FOR PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS

WOULD BE HELD MARCH 10 NOTWITHSTANDING PNA DECISION TO BOYCOTT THEM. (LAHORE 191). HE SAID IT WAS FOR PNA TO DECIDE "IN THEIR GREATER WISDOM" WHETHER TO BOYCOTT THE PROVINCIAL POLLS OR RESIGN FROM THE NA SEATS WON BY THE ALLIANCE. REPLYING TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE EMERGENCY AND PRESS FREEDOM, THE PM SAID THAT MANY BARRIERS HAD BEEN REMOVED DURING THE ELECTION PERIOD, AND THAT OPPOSITION LEADERS HAD HAD FULL LIBERTY TO GO ABOUT THE COUNTRY AND SAY WHAT THEY WISHED. HE SAID HE DID NOT INTEND TO TAKE ANY ACTION AGAINST STATEMENTS MADE BY THESE LEADERS DURING THE CAMPAIGN SINCE "A CERTAIN LATITUDE" HAD TO BE ALLOWED. HE WARNED THAT IF THE OPPOSITION TRIED TO INVITE THE PEOPLE INTO THE STREETS FOR AGITATION, THE GOVERNMENT WAS QUITE COMPETENT TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION.

4. LAHORE STATEMENT BY PNA LEADERS ANNOUNCING BOYCOTTING OF ELECTION WAS ECHOED IN STATEMENTS MADE BY PNA LEADERS ELSEWHERE IN COUNTRY. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN RAWALPINDI, ASGHAR KHAN WENT ON TO CHARGE THAT ELECTION HAD BEEN A FARCE AND CALLED UPON CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER TO RESIGN. HE PROVIDED NEWSMEN, WHICH INCLUDED SIZEABLE FOREIGN CONTINGENT, WITH DETAILED ALLEGATIONS OF VOTING IRREGULARITIES PERPETRATED BY PPP AND GOVERNMENT. CLAIMING THAT THERE HAD BEEN A STRONG POPULAR REACTION TO RESULTS, HE DID NOT CALL ON PEOPLE TO TAKE TO STREETS (DESPITE HIS PRE-ELECTION STATEMENTS) AND SPOKE INSTEAD OF THE NEED TO MAINTAIN DEMOCRATIC TRADITIONS AND CARRY ON MISSION PEACEFULLY. HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT WHEN PNA CONSIDERS FUTURE STRATEGY HE WILL ARGUE IN FAVOR OF ITS ABANDONING THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SEATS IT WON IN MONDAY'S POLLING.

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5. IN ANOTHER PRESS CONFERENCE, THIS ONE IN KARACHI, PNA LEADER SHERBAZ MAZARI ANNOUNCED THAT THE PARTY LEADERSHIP THERE HAD DECIDED BOTH TO BOYCOTT THE PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS AND TO OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING DAY (FRIDAY) AS "A HARTAL (WORK STOPPAGE) AND PROTEST DAY." WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE PNA INTENDS TO STAGE THE HARTAL AND PROTEST DAY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, BUT HAVE NO INDICATION YET OF THE ALLIANCE'S PROSPECTIVE STRATEGY FOR THE PROVINCIAL ELECTION DAY OR HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPLEMENT ITS HAAL CALL:

6. QAIYUM MUSLIM LEAGUE AND PAKHTOONWHA NAP HAVE ALSO CALLED FOR BOYCOTT OF TOMORROW'S PROVINCIAL ELECTION. LATTER, WHICH WAS EDGED OUT IN CLOSE QUETTA RACE BY PPP, CONTENDED THAT BALUCHISTAN VOTING HAD BEEN MARRED BY IRREGULARITIES.

7. LAW AND ORDER SITUATION THROUGHOUT COUNTRY REPORTEDLY QUIET, BUT CONGEN KARACHI REPORTS THAT TENSION IS HIGH IN TWO STRONGLY PNA AREAS THERE IN THE WAKE OF THE NA ELECTION AND THE PNA CHALLENGE OF THE RESULTS. THE SIND GOVERNMENT HAS ANNMINCED THAT

SECURITY AT POLLING STATIONS, ESPECIALLY WOMEN'S POLLING STATIONS,  
DURING THE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE  
ARMY. THIS DECISION MAY STEM IN PART FROM CONCERN THAT THE PNA  
BOYCOTT WILL INSPIRE VIOLENCE, BUT IT ALSO REFLECTS THE FACT THAT  
INDIVIDUAL POLLING PLACE SECURITY ON MARCH 7 WAS DEFICIENT AS  
DEMONSTRATED BY THE SCUFFLES AND MORE SERIOUS INCIDENTS THAT  
OCCURRED.  
BYROAD

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## Message Attributes

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